



POLICY AND PROCEDURE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

03-08AM

Effective
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**ACQUISITION OF FIRE AND RESCUE
APPARATUS**

MONTGOMERY COUNTY FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE POLICY
ACQUISITION OF FIRE AND RESCUE APPARATUS

Issued by: Fire Chief

Policy No. 03-08AM

Supersedes FRC Policy 03-08, *Acquisition of Fire and Rescue Vehicles*, 4/15/02

Authority: Montgomery County Code Section 21-2.(d)(4)

Effective: July 15, 2007

Section 1. Purpose: To establish a procedure to verify apparatus specifications, review processes, and approval criteria for all proposed MCFRS apparatus acquisitions, and ensure their compliance with the apparatus safety and performance requirements established by the Fire Chief.

The adoption of this apparatus management policy addresses, in part, Recommendation #15.I. of the "Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service Fire, Rescue, Emergency Medical Services and Community Risk Reduction Master Plan," known as the "Master Plan."

Section 2. Applicability: This policy applies to all apparatus acquired to provide service in the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.

Section 3. Definitions.

- a. **Apparatus.** A vehicle having a GVWR greater than 10,000 pounds, designed specifically to provide fire suppression, rescue, and/or emergency medical services. Combination units, and/or trailers, are also included in this category.
- b. **Apparatus Section.** The MCFRS Section responsible for managing the design, acquisition, inspection, maintenance and repair of MCFRS apparatus, tools and equipment. The Apparatus Section Chief is appointed by the Fire Chief.
- c. **Apparatus Specifications Committee (ASC).** A committee appointed by the Fire Chief that reports to the Apparatus Section Chief. The committee's membership includes: an MCFRS mechanic; a representative of the Montgomery County Volunteer Fire/Rescue Association; a representative of the IAFF Local 1664; and an MCFRS career Certified Chief Officer, who is a non-voting member.



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The ASC is charged with developing Minimum Apparatus Requirements, and reviewing the specifications for the system-wide acquisition and construction of new or refurbished fire and rescue apparatus.

- d. **Applicable Safety Standards.** NFPA Standards and recommended practices, federal DOT, and other appropriate federal, State, and local laws/regulations relating to a vehicle's safety and performance requirements.
- e. **County-Purchased Units.** Fire and rescue apparatus whose acquisition and support costs, including vehicle insurance, career staffing, fuel, maintenance, repairs, and rehabilitation, are provided entirely with County tax funds.
- f. **Like-for-Like Replacement.** The acquisition of a vehicle or apparatus that replaces a similar vehicle, but does not increase the existing fleet (e.g., an engine purchased to replace an engine).
- g. **LFRD-Purchased Units.** Fire and rescue apparatus that are purchased and owned by a Local Fire and Rescue Department (LFRD), but whose costs to provide vehicle insurance, career staffing, fuel, maintenance, repairs, and rehabilitation are sustained in whole or in part with County tax funds, or provided entirely with non-tax funds. (**NOTE:** The installation and maintenance of the County-owned voice and Mobile Data Communications (MDC) equipment is not covered in this policy.)
- h. **Minimum Apparatus Requirements.** A list of the minimum safety and performance-based requirements for apparatus acquisition that will be developed by the Apparatus Specifications Committee, and approved by the Fire Chief. A *Fire Chief's General Order* containing the Minimum Apparatus Requirements will be issued and updated as necessary, based on changes to applicable laws, safety standards, recommended practices, MCFRS policy, vehicle design, and performance innovations. At a minimum, these breed-specific lists will be reviewed annually by the Apparatus Specifications Committee and the Apparatus Section Chief, and a revised *Fire Chief's General Order* will be issued.
- i. **Safety Section.** The MCFRS Section responsible for overseeing the safety, health, and welfare of MCFRS personnel. The Safety Section Chief is appointed by the Fire Chief.

Section 4. Policy. The MCFRS **Apparatus Section** will review the proposed acquisition of all MCFRS **apparatus** to ensure their compliance with applicable safety and performance standards, and approved MCFRS planning documents. The Apparatus Section Chief will then make final written recommendations to the Fire Chief. It is the joint



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responsibility of the **Apparatus Section** and the **Safety Section** to conduct a final inspection of completed **apparatus** before placing any vehicle in service.

The Fire Chief may consider requests for emergency acquisitions, based on a critical service need. Any request for emergency acquisition must be submitted in writing to the Fire Chief, with appropriate justification. If an emergency acquisition is approved by the Fire Chief, all timelines stated in the Procedures Section of this policy will be expedited.

Section 5. Procedure.

a. LFRD-Purchased Apparatus.

1. **Like-for-Like Apparatus.** Before signing an agreement to acquire fire and rescue **apparatus**, the LFRD President must provide the Fire Chief with a written notice of the LFRD's intent. The notification must indicate: the type of apparatus to be acquired; technical information as described below; and whether the LFRD intends to request County tax funds to support the unit. All **apparatus** must meet or exceed the **Minimum Apparatus Requirements**.
2. **Apparatus of a Different Type, or Apparatus that Increases MCFRS' Authorized Fleet Inventory.** Before signing an agreement to acquire fire and rescue **apparatus**, the LFRD President must provide the Fire Chief with a written notice of the LFRD's intent. The notification must indicate: the type of **apparatus** to be acquired; technical information as described below; and whether the LFRD intends to request County tax funds to support the unit. All **apparatus** must meet or exceed the **Minimum Apparatus Requirements**, and the documentation must include:
 - i. an annual estimate of the vehicle's complete operating, maintenance, and staffing costs; and
 - ii. initial service impact statements explaining: how the new vehicle will improve service to the community; the new vehicle's anticipated effect on the recommendations of the MCFRS *Master Plan*; the impact of the proposed acquisition on MCFRS' ability to meet response time goals; and any other applicable Service factors.
3. **Technical Information Requirements.** Information the LFRD must provide to the Fire Chief regarding the **apparatus** specifications must include, but is not limited to:



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- i. **For new apparatus:** A copy of the technical specifications and five-sided line drawings of the vehicle.
 - ii. **For previously-owned apparatus:** A copy of the vehicle's technical specifications, or modifications to the vehicle's original design, if available; a record of any major maintenance/repairs or collision damage; any records indicating the vehicle's refurbishment or rehabilitation; a description of the vehicle; its year, make, and model; the vehicle identification number; its mileage; and any options or add-on features.
 - iii. **For watercraft:** The vehicle's technical specifications; line drawings; and, if it was previously owned, its maintenance records and repair history, if available. If applicable, written certification that the vehicle has passed a marine survey must also be provided.
4. **Non-Tax Fund Support.** If the LFRD chooses to use non-tax funds to support the operation of the unit, the LFRD must also submit to the Fire Chief a written accountability program to ensure that County tax funds are **not** required for the vehicle's insurance, equipment, maintenance, repair, refurbishment, or fuel costs.
5. **Approval Procedure.**
- i. The Fire Chief will immediately forward the notification documents to the Apparatus Section Chief.
 - ii. The Apparatus Section Chief will review the proposed service to which the vehicle is to be assigned. The Apparatus Section Chief will ensure that the vehicle complies with the approved MCFRS *Master Plan*; that the vehicle meets service delivery requirements; and that the vehicle meets or exceeds the **Minimum Apparatus Requirements**.
 - iii. The Apparatus Section Chief will then request the **Safety Section** to review the documentation, and forward its written comment(s) to the Apparatus Section Chief within 20 days.
 - iv. The Apparatus Section Chief will provide a final written recommendation to the Fire Chief within 45 days of receiving the Fire Chief's documentation on the proposed vehicle.



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- v. The Fire Chief will resolve any outstanding issues with the LFRD, and notify the LFRD of his/her intent to support or not support the vehicle's operation with County tax funds, as applicable.
- vi. The LFRD will perform inspections during the manufacturing process, and is responsible for accepting the completed **apparatus**.
- vii. The LFRD must notify the Apparatus Section Chief when it has taken delivery of the vehicle.
- viii. The **Apparatus Section** and the **Safety Section** will inspect the vehicle before placing it in service. The Fire Chief will resolve any outstanding issues with the LFRD before the vehicle is placed in service.

b. County-Purchased Apparatus.

- 1. The Fire Chief will: review the proposed service to which the vehicle is to be assigned; determine the vehicle's service delivery requirements and fiscal impact; and ensure that the vehicle complies with the approved *MCFRS Master Plan*.
- 2. The Fire Chief will budget funds for recommended **apparatus** acquisitions, and ensure that their acquisition complies with all applicable Montgomery County regulations.
- 3. The **Apparatus Section** and **Apparatus Specifications Committee** will develop unit specifications that meet or exceed the current **Minimum Apparatus Requirements**.
- 4. The Apparatus Section Chief will determine the appropriate contract source selection methods, and enter into a contract in accordance with Montgomery County's Procurement Law and Regulations.
- 5. The Apparatus Section Chief will request the **Safety Section** to review the specifications, and forward its written comments to the Apparatus Section Chief within 20 days.
- 6. The Fire Chief will resolve any outstanding issues between the **Apparatus Section** and the **Safety Section** before the manufacturing process of the **apparatus** begins.



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7. The **Apparatus Section** will perform inspections during the manufacturing process, and is responsible for accepting the completed **apparatus**.
 8. The **Apparatus Section** and the **Safety Section** will inspect the vehicle before placing it in service.
- c. **Insurance.** All **LFRD-Purchased Units** and **County-Purchased Units** *must* be insured under the MCFRS insurance program in effect at the time the vehicle is delivered and placed in service, at the insurance limits determined by MCFRS. All requests for insurance coverage for MCFRS and LFRD vehicles must be coordinated through the **Apparatus Section**.

Section 6. Disposition of Apparatus. In accordance with Sec. 21-26 of the County Code, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) must approve each sale or disposition of any **apparatus** to ensure that the sale or other disposition does not adversely affect the public interest. The proportionate share of the proceeds of any such disposition attributable to fire tax funds must be used by the LFRD for fire, rescue or emergency medical services, or be returned to the fire tax district. Under Sec. 21-26 of the County Code, the CAO has designated the Fire Chief to sell or dispose of any MCFRS **apparatus**.

Section 7. Enforcement: The Fire Chief is the implementation and enforcement authority for all policies and regulations of the Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service.

Section 8. Effective Date: This policy is effective on July 15, 2007.

Approved:

Thomas W. Carr, Jr., Chief
Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service

6/29/07

Date

Apparatus acquisition policy final bf wp 6-07

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY.

OFFICE OF COUNTY ATTORNEY

BY

DATE 6/26/07